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Strategic assessment of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau

Special report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 28 of Security Council resolution 2404 (2018), in which the Council requested me to submit, by the end of November 2018, an assessment of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), including options for a possible reconfiguration of the United Nations presence in the country and reprioritization of tasks.

2. An independent senior expert was hired to conduct a strategic assessment mission in Guinea-Bissau from 28 September to 4 October 2018. A senior representative from the Department of Political Affairs and representatives from the Department of Field Support, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (representing the United Nations Sustainable Development Group), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) were also deployed to support the independent expert. The strategic assessment mission met with many national, regional and international stakeholders in Bissau and Dakar, held discussions with UNIOGBIS staff members and the United Nations country team and visited the UNIOGBIS regional office in Bafatá. The senior expert also undertook separate consultations with high-level officials from the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the European Union.

3. The findings outlined in the present report, while informed by the work carried out by the senior expert and the technical contributions of the United Nations representatives who participated in the strategic assessment mission, are consistent with my assessment of UNIOGBIS. The report includes my recommendations for the reprioritization of tasks and options for the future United Nations presence in the country.

II. Background

4. The United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) was established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1233 (1999), in

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the wake of the 1998/99 civil war, as a special political mission headed by a representative of the Secretary-General. In 2009, UNOGBIS had up to 32 staff members, half of whom were international staff.

5. The structure and mandate of the mission have since evolved. Following the serious deterioration of the political situation resulting from the assassinations of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, General Batista Tagme Na Waie, and the President of Guinea-Bissau, João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira, on 1 and 2 March 2009, respectively, the Security Council established UNIOGBIS to succeed UNOGBIS as of 1 January 2010, through its resolution 1876 (2009), to be headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General, supported in turn by a Deputy Special Representative, who is also the United Nations resident coordinator and UNDP resident representative, and 119 staff members (including 64 international staff members). Since 2010, UNIOGBIS has consisted of four core substantive units: the Political Affairs Section; the Security Sector Reform Section, which later became the Rule of Law and Security Institutions Section; the Human Rights and Gender Section; and the Public Information Unit, which later became the Information and Strategic Communication Unit. UNIOGBIS also opened permanent field offices (currently three, with one seasonal office), which were each to be staffed by one political affairs officer and one national human rights officer, to support the United Nations country team and provide the basis for activities carried out by the Organization's agencies, funds and programmes in the regions outside the city of Bissau.

6. Following the military coup of April 2012, throughout the transitional phase until the legislative and presidential elections held in 2014 and during the brokering of the Conakry Agreement on the Implementation of the ECOWAS Road Map for the Resolution of the Political Crisis in Guinea-Bissau and its aftermath, the Security Council approved successive proposals to adjust the configuration and mandate of UNIOGBIS. Proposals for those reconfigurations were prepared pursuant to a technical assessment mission in 2013, a strategic assessment mission in 2014 and a strategic review mission in 2016. In its latest configuration, following the 2016 strategic review mission, the political capacities of UNIOGBIS were strengthened and United Nations integration on the ground was further enhanced, with the Deputy Special Representative mandated to oversee all UNIOGBIS programmatic peacebuilding activities as both United Nations resident coordinator and UNDP resident representative. Under its 2018 budget, UNIOGBIS maintains 142 positions, including 63 international staff members, in addition to 15 uniformed personnel.

7. By its resolution 2404 (2018), the Security Council extended the mandate of UNIOGBIS until 28 February 2019 and requested the mission to focus its efforts on three priorities: (a) supporting the full implementation of the Conakry Agreement and facilitating an inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation process; (b) supporting, through good offices, the electoral process to ensure inclusive, free and credible legislative elections in 2018 within the legally mandated timeframe; and (c) providing support, including technical assistance, to the national authorities with a view to expediting and completing the review of the Constitution of Guinea-Bissau. The Council also mandated UNIOGBIS to carry out the following tasks: (a) strengthen democratic institutions and State organs; (b) promote and protect human rights; (c) provide strategic and technical advice and support to the Government to combat drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, in close cooperation with UNODC; (d) incorporate a gender perspective into peacebuilding; and (e) mobilize, harmonize and coordinate international assistance, namely from the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, ECOWAS and the European Union, with a view to upcoming elections. Meanwhile, the three paragraphs outlining the tasks relating to rule of law and security institutions, which had been included in the mandate of the mission since its establishment, were deleted.

III. Findings of the strategic assessment

A. Situational analysis

8. To succeed in its overall objective of supporting peace consolidation in Guinea-Bissau, UNIOGBIS requires the presence of a political leadership committed to the consolidation of peace and stability, the strengthening of democracy and the delivery of good and effective governance on the basis of the observance of the rule of law and respect for human rights. Such political will appears to be lacking, as the political process in the country has been marked by coups and counter-coups, the targeted assassination of senior political and military figures and institutional crises generated by personal disagreements among leading figures of the executive branch of Government. Thus, although it has avoided widespread violence, gross human rights violations and a humanitarian crisis, Guinea-Bissau is in a state of chronic political instability, primarily afflicted by longstanding disputes among political elites that have been ineffectively litigated by a politicized judiciary in Bissau.

9. The immediate triggers of the most recent institutional crisis relate to the decision by the President, José Mário Vaz, to dismiss the Prime Minister, Domingos Simões Pereira, in 2015. Mr. Simões Pereira is the leader of the ruling African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde — PAIGC), which had won the largest share of the vote (nearly 48 per cent) during the 2014 legislative elections. In the months that preceded the Prime Minister's ouster, his relationship with the President had deteriorated, as they disagreed significantly on the management of the country, on the use of government funds and on certain Cabinet nominations. The leaders of various PAIGC factions and influential businesspersons excluded from government positions, and consequently from access to State funds, reportedly fuelled the rivalry between the President and the Prime Minister.

10. Between late 2015 and late 2016, the President appointed and dismissed two Prime Ministers who were unable to cobble together a majority in the National Assembly to pass a government programme and the State budget. Ultimately, an ECOWAS-facilitated mediation process led to the adoption of a six-point road map in September 2016 and the signature of the Conakry Agreement on 14 October of the same year. Despite renewed hope for reconciliation and stability, and the international support generated by the Agreement, its implementation was undermined by the inability of the Guinea-Bissau signatories to agree on the implementation of two key provisions: the appointment of a consensus Prime Minister and the modalities for the reintegration of 15 dissident PAIGC parliamentarians back into the party.

11. Despite intense diplomatic efforts by ECOWAS, with support from the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the European Union and the United Nations, the signatories of the Conakry Agreement did not implement any of its provisions for nearly two years. After repeated calls by ECOWAS for the appointment by the President of a consensus Prime Minister went unheeded, on 4 February 2018, the subregional body imposed targeted sanctions against 19 political stakeholders deemed to be obstructing the implementation of the Agreement. The stigma associated with that action prompted internal dialogue initiatives, facilitated by the Bishop of Bissau, who was assisted through the good offices of Angola and UNIOGBIS.

12. After nearly three years of institutional paralysis, ECOWAS achieved a breakthrough at its extraordinary summit held in Lomé on 14 April 2018. During the summit, President Vaz agreed to appoint Aristides Gomes as Prime Minister and to schedule the next round of parliamentary elections for 18 November 2018. On the

same occasion, the President of the National Assembly pledged to convene a plenary parliamentary session to extend the mandate of the current legislature and nominate the members of the National Electoral Commission. Since then, most key provisions of the Conakry Agreement have been, or are in the process of being, implemented. The 15 expelled PAIGC members have not yet been reintegrated, however, and no stability pact has yet been signed. Some of those expelled have since formed their own political party.

13. At its core, the key drivers of instability in Guinea-Bissau have remained largely unchanged since the previous strategic review mission to the country, deployed in 2016. Those drivers boil down to the following structural factors: a profoundly divided political class, driven by narrowly defined and antagonistic group interests; the growing political influence of a parallel economy based on narcotics trafficking; the absence of the State, especially in rural areas, and the fact that, where present, it is largely ineffective; the generalized lack of respect for the rule of law; violations of human rights and widespread impunity therefor; a general atmosphere of resignation with regard to poverty; and lack of access to basic services. In addition, there are increasingly worrisome signs of the presence of operatives of extremist networks from the Sahel and elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau.

B. The role of international partners

14. Over the years, UNIOGBIS has built a solid platform for cooperation with the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, ECOWAS and the European Union, as well as with bilateral partners of Guinea-Bissau. Collectively, those partners have remained actively engaged with Guinea-Bissau stakeholders and supportive of national reform agendas. International partners, however, have expressed frustration with the slow progress of reforms and what they perceive as a limited sense of ownership and responsibility among national counterparts. The protracted institutional paralysis that lasted from 2015 to early 2018 has not helped to dispel such concerns.

15. At the political level, ECOWAS engagement with the country has been recurring and multifaceted, through its liaison office in Bissau, the regular deployment of its ministerial follow-up committee and joint and individual initiatives led by the ECOWAS Mediator for Guinea-Bissau and the Chairpersons of the ECOWAS Authority. ECOWAS also continues to contribute to security through its peace operation, the ECOWAS mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB), which protects government institutions and political leaders. Since the deployment of ECOMIB in 2012, the country's military has maintained a republican stance, according to its constitutionally prescribed role. There have been no political assassinations or incidents of serious violence, and the salutary effect of ECOMIB as a deterrent is widely recognized.

16. Current international assistance has been focused on the provision of technical, financial and material support towards the organization of credible legislative elections in 2018. Preparations for elections are underway, although their organization, like all other electoral processes in Guinea-Bissau, has faced several challenges. At the same time, there is no guarantee that elections will be a panacea to the problems affecting the country. The solution may lie in the review of the Constitution to clarify the division of labour between the two branches of Government.

IV. Assessment of the United Nations presence in Guinea-Bissau

A. The role of UNIOGBIS

17. The presence of UNIOGBIS is unanimously valued by the Government, civil society and international partners on the ground. One interlocutor stated that UNIOGBIS had played a critical preventive role and that without it, the situation in Guinea-Bissau could have been much worse. Interlocutors also unanimously asserted that, in the immediate future and during the politically sensitive electoral cycle expected to last through mid-2019, the joint presence of the mission and ECOMIB was critical, as that presence was expected to continue to have a dissuasive effect on potential spoilers. Many interlocutors, however, have called for a lighter United Nations political footprint in the country after the electoral cycle and a greater emphasis of international assistance on economic and social development.

18. Beyond its important preventive role, through the good offices and political mediation of my Special Representative, UNIOGBIS has also had a significant positive impact on the development and strengthening of the capacities of civil society organizations, in particular women's groups that had played a key role in generating the political will that led to the compromise agreed to in Conakry. UNIOGBIS also provided critical support to the members of the organizing commission on the national conference on reconciliation, enabling them to better mobilize national and international attention and resources to reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts.

19. UNIOGBIS has engaged with a broad range of national stakeholders who were parties to the political and institutional crisis, in order to facilitate sustained, constructive dialogue and the full implementation of the Conakry Agreement. UNIOGBIS engaged with ECOWAS, the European Union and the African Union in Bissau, as well as the wider diplomatic community, to mobilize their support and generate collective pressure for the implementation of the Agreement. The mission's efforts included regular consultations and good offices with national political stakeholders, the provision of financial and logistical support to ECOWAS high-level missions to Guinea-Bissau and the participation of Guinea-Bissau stakeholders at ECOWAS summits. However, UNIOGBIS could further strengthen its engagement as the convener of meetings of the "Guinea-Bissau P5" group, which consists of the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, ECOWAS, the European Union and the United Nations.

20. Since April 2018, there have been modest signs of progress towards a national commitment to countering drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. Government interlocutors acknowledged the scope of the problem and the role of some military and security chiefs in the drug trade. Some interlocutors suggested that other actors, beyond those in the military and security forces, were also involved with drug trafficking networks, which further undermined government efforts against this scourge. Still other interlocutors emphasized that the issue had a subregional dimension, which would require a concomitant response and which should be given the highest priority on the political and security agendas of ECOWAS, and that more focus should be placed on the origin of the trade. In a context where powerful implicated parties do not want effective State institutions, however, UNIOGBIS and United Nations country team efforts to counter drug trafficking and transnational organized crime are unlikely to bear the desired results.

21. In terms of priorities for UNIOGBIS, interlocutors frequently cited reforms of the security, justice and public administration sectors and the continued work of the mission's gender and human rights components. Drug trafficking and growing religious extremism were also identified as areas of concern on which the United

Nations, as a whole, should focus. Any effort by UNIOGBIS and other international partners with regard to those priorities will not succeed, however, in the absence of strong political will and a sense of ownership on the part of the national authorities.

B. The United Nations country team

22. The United Nations country team consists of 16 agencies, funds and programmes, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. United Nations country team activities are anchored in the Partnership Framework between Guinea-Bissau and the United Nations for the period 2016–2020, which has a total budget of $341 million. The Framework supports the implementation of the national priorities articulated in the national development plan, "Terra Ranka", for the period 2015–2020, which is focused on economic growth and poverty reduction, human development, sustainable resources management and strengthening the rule of law and governance. The impact of the Framework to date has been limited.

23. By 2017, Guinea-Bissau had made progress in achieving some of the Sustainable Development Goals, such as lowering the child mortality rate and expanding primary education and environmental protections. Still, the country currently ranks 177th out of 189 countries on the human development index (HDI), with an index value of 0.455. Almost 70 per cent of the population is defined as living on the poverty line (under $2 a day) and over one third is extremely poor (living below $1 a day). The quality and availability of health services remain among the country's major problems, as evidenced by the low level of mean life expectancy, estimated at only 57.8 years of age in 2017. Human development in the country remains precarious, largely owing to the low allocation of budgetary resources for the education and health sectors, at 8.2 per cent (2.1 per cent of the gross domestic product) and 6.1 per cent (1.6 per cent of the gross domestic product), respectively, of the 2018 State budget.

24. While Guinea-Bissau is not a participant in the "Delivering as one" pilot programme, the Government and the United Nations country team are committed to gradually reinforcing the operationalization of that approach. The Partnership Framework facilitates the connection between UNIOGBIS and the United Nations country team. UNIOGBIS co-chairs the Framework outcome group on rule of law and governance. The United Nations has one joint programme, on police, justice and corrections, implemented by UNDP, UNIOGBIS, OHCHR, UNODC, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). The total budget of the joint programme is $25 million over three years. Since the changes to the mandate of UNIOGBIS introduced in resolution 2404 (2018), the components on police and corrections have been dormant, and UNDP has been focusing on justice.

25. The situation in Guinea-Bissau is on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, and the Peacebuilding Fund has been a strong supporter of the country. Since 2008, the Fund has allocated $40 million to peacebuilding programmes there. Its current portfolio consists of six projects under the Immediate Response Facility, valued at close to $7.5 million over 18 months. The United Nations entities involved are UNDP, UNICEF, UNIOGBIS, UN-Women, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme and the International Organization for Migration.

C. Challenges

26. The main challenges encountered by UNIOGBIS in delivering on resolution 2404 (2018) are outlined below.

1. Limited political will

27. Strong national political will for stability is a precondition to achieving progress towards sustainable peace, stability and development in Guinea-Bissau. It constitutes the key factor that will allow the various political forces to place the interests of the nation above their competing group interests, agree on the fundamentals and develop a common vision for the present and the future of the country. Importantly, it will also create an environment conducive to maximizing the impact of the international community's multifaceted assistance, including the efforts of the United Nations in the country. However, limited and inconsistent political will among national stakeholders has regularly stalled progress in the implementation of the institutional reforms cited in the Conakry Agreement. According to the Agreement, those reforms should be implemented prior to the holding of elections, but political negotiations and technical preparations for the implementation of the reforms have been upstaged by electoral manoeuvring.

2. Limited absorption capacities

28. Existing national capacities in terms of institutional and physical infrastructure and trained human resources are very low. That situation, compounded by recurring political and institutional instability, negatively affects the country's capacity to absorb technical and financial support delivered by international partners and limits the potentially positive impact of such support.

29. The United Nations has frequently organized training sessions and workshops to strengthen the capacities of national counterparts in public institutions. However, such activities are often implemented in an uncoordinated way, with no link to broader human resources policies and without prior capacity needs assessments. Furthermore, attendance at capacity-building training sessions, conferences and workshops may often be motivated by the prospect of receiving daily subsistence or transportation allowances, which are provided almost systematically to participants in events organized by the United Nations in Guinea-Bissau and which may have contributed to a culture characterized by a "cash-for-workshop" mentality.

3. Long-term dependency on the mission

30. The work carried out by UNIOGBIS, operating at a strategic level, coordinating the representatives of the international community in the country and acting as a deterrent to spoilers, has been extremely valuable. Nevertheless, its presence may also have contributed to a reduced sense of ownership of the political process among the leaders of Guinea-Bissau and of their responsibility to move the country forward.

4. Limited United Nations integration

31. The instruments for integration are formally in place but need to be fully utilized to promote coherence across the United Nations presence in Guinea-Bissau. Coordination mechanisms should be used not only for information exchange, but also for strategic and joint planning and for assessment purposes.

5. Underutilized regional presence and programmes

32. Ongoing difficulties in implementing reforms at the national level and the persistent disengagement of governing institutions in Bissau with local communities in the regions may indicate a need to shift investments to the local level to build capacities from the bottom up. The mission's regional presence (Bafatá, Buba, Bubaque and São Domingos) had previously been focused on tasks relating to rule of law and security institutions, combined with a public information component and, in

Bafatá, a political affairs component that played a role in community-level engagement. While the mission may have intended to refocus the efforts of its regional offices on political analysis and engagement with regional and local authorities, the regional offices appear to be underutilized by both UNIOGBIS and the United Nations country team. Moreover, the locations of UNIOGBIS regional offices are not in areas where UNDP, for example, operates. In addition, operating costs for such regional offices are very high.

V. Reprioritization of tasks and reconfiguration of the United Nations presence in Guinea-Bissau

33. Since the end of the civil war in 1999, there has been no widespread violence in Guinea-Bissau, nor have there been any humanitarian emergencies or systematic gross violations of human rights. Nevertheless, the country has been in a state of chronic political instability that tends to become even more volatile during elections. As the country enters a new electoral period, which is expected to last through mid-2019, both UNIOGBIS and ECOMIB are perceived as having a dissuasive effect on spoilers. While all interlocutors urged UNIOGBIS to remain in Guinea-Bissau, at least until the end of the present electoral cycle, they also recommended that United Nations support after the elections be focused on increased development assistance and capacity-building, including the creation of conditions conducive to implementing the broader reform agenda.

34. Assuming that legislative elections, although delayed, do take place and political tensions do not reach crisis proportions, a reconfiguration of UNIOGBIS and a reprioritization of its tasks should be considered, to reflect a more coherent, nimble and effective peace and security pillar aligned more closely with the development and human rights pillars. On the basis of that assumption, I would recommend three phases of intervention, during which the United Nations would focus on good offices and the coordination of international partners. The United Nations presence would also implement tasks relating to the protection of human rights; to combating drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, in close cooperation with UNODC; and to the provision of support to the Government to incorporate a gender perspective into peacebuilding, with varying degrees of emphasis. The three phases of United Nations engagement are outlined in greater detail below.

A. Phase I: electoral phase (until June 2019)

35. During phase I, UNIOGBIS would remain as currently configured and prioritize support for the holding of legislative and presidential elections. Its activities would entail increased good offices with national actors and political support to and coordination with ECOWAS and the other members of the Guinea-Bissau P5 group. Other components of UNIOGBIS would be geared towards providing support to the overall good offices function of the mission. They would also help to support technical-level coordination with the Guinea-Bissau P5 group.

B. Phase II: immediate post-electoral phase (June–December 2019)

36. The United Nations presence should be focused on the establishment of conditions conducive for the implementation of the reform agenda. That approach should include preparations for the UNIOGBIS transition plan, which would be linked to the development of the new Partnership Framework, in coordination with national authorities and international partners. The other components of the United Nations

presence would promote a "good offices for good governance" approach and provide strategic advice and support to the Government for the strengthening of democratic institutions. Further guidance on the specific focus of programmatic engagement, including potentially prioritizing local and regional engagement if adequate entry points exist, should be provided in the context of an integrated transition strategy. The latter should be informed by the recommendations contained in the present report, by the UNDP mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support strategy, which will be aimed at identifying priorities to help the country to accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and by a mapping of the United Nations country team's capacities to deliver adequate programmatic support.

C. Phase III: transition and exit (no later than 31 December 2020)

37. Phase III would entail the implementation of the transition plan defined during phase II and the gradual transfer of tasks from UNIOGBIS to the United Nations country team, UNOWAS and international partners. More broadly, investments in strengthening the capacity of citizens to engage with public institutions and the Government on peacebuilding, reconciliation, governance and economic development issues should continue. Consideration should also be given to increasing the capacities of the United Nations presence to design and implement peacebuilding programmes focused on civil society and grass-roots organizations.

38. The reconfiguration of UNIOGBIS should take place after the completion of the electoral cycle, namely, as of phase II. I recommend establishing a streamlined good offices special political mission in Bissau, focused on facilitating the political process and led by a special representative at the assistant secretary-general level. To facilitate the implementation of this recommendation, an integrated component could be established to help to incrementally build up the capacity of the United Nations country team, while gradually drawing down the mission until its final exit no later than 31 December 2020. I would also recommend that the UNIOGBIS drawdown, initiated pursuant to Security Council resolution 2404 (2018), commence with the immediate closure of its regional offices.

VI. Conclusion

39. I welcomed the opportunity to assess UNIOGBIS at the request of the Security Council. Support for the electoral process remains a key priority for the United Nations, in line with Security Council resolution 2404 (2018). While progress has been made by the State authorities since the resolution was adopted in February 2018, maintaining the current strength and mandate of UNIOGBIS until June 2019 will ensure that the mission has the full capacity to support the electoral process, including by providing good offices to national actors and coordinating efforts with the Guinea-Bissau P5 group.

40. Considering the significant investment that the United Nations has made in Guinea-Bissau, including through the presence of a political mission for two decades, it is imperative to ensure that the UNIOGBIS exit process is managed in a way that would help to maintain the gains achieved thus far. I believe that the best way to meet this goal is to establish a streamlined good offices special political mission following the end of the electoral cycle. Such a "streamlined UNIOGBIS" would prepare a transition plan that would clearly identify the programmatic tasks to be handed over to the United Nations country team and the timing for doing so. Moreover, the transition plan would be prepared in close collaboration with the national authorities,

the United Nations country team and international partners, thereby ensuring full ownership by all stakeholders.

41. Given the key role of ECOWAS in support of the political process in Guinea-Bissau, and considering the mandate of UNOWAS, I have requested my Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel to increase the engagement of the UNOWAS regional office in Guinea-Bissau. In that regard, UNOWAS will work together with UNIOGBIS to ensure that ECOWAS and individual regional leaders keep the situation in Guinea-Bissau on their agendas, not only during the critical electoral period, but also beyond that period, when the country will need assistance from the international community to implement a reform agenda. UNOWAS will also help to promote more prominent discussions within ECOWAS on regional issues of importance for Guinea-Bissau, such as drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. Upon the exit of UNIOGBIS, UNOWAS would take over the good offices functions.

42. In a context of economic austerity, it will be important for the United Nations to remain engaged in Guinea-Bissau, throughout the transition and exit phase and beyond, to help to mobilize the international community in support of the institutional reform agenda. In that regard, the role of the Peacebuilding Commission will be indispensable. The United Nations could also invest in better aid coordination and resource mobilization capacities in Guinea-Bissau. That would dovetail with the expected reinvigoration of the role and capacities of the office of the resident coordinator, in line with General Assembly resolution 72/279.

43. I would like to express my gratitude to the senior expert, João Honwana, for leading the assessment and to my Special Representative for Guinea-Bissau and Head of UNIOGBIS, José Viegas Filho, for his leadership of the mission, as well as to all United Nations personnel in Guinea-Bissau for their support for and participation in the process. I would also like to thank all interlocutors who provided their views on the role of UNIOGBIS. In developing my recommendations, consideration was given to the priorities of Guinea-Bissau stakeholders and to the concerns of regional and international partners. Looking ahead, the ongoing partnership between the Government and the United Nations, in whatever form that may take on the ground, will be crucial to ensuring the support of the international community for peacebuilding and the implementation of key reforms in Guinea-Bissau.